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CONCERNING FULKE GREVILLE'S
(LORD BROOKE'S) TRAGEDIES,
ALAHAM AND *MUSTAPHA*.

THE DATES OF THE TWO PLAYS.

Tho the scenes of Greville's two tragedies, *Alaham* and *Mustapha*, lie in the far off Orient, their relationship to current happenings in the political circles of England itself was very close; and if they are considered in the light of this relationship, the dates of their composition can be determined with a fair degree of accuracy.

It will be recalled that the last years of Elizabeth were filled with sadness and gloom. All her old counsellors and favorites: Leicester, Walsingham, and Burleigh had died before the new century opened. Their successors, not having become attached to the brilliant queen in her early years, hoped only for her death, and were busily intriguing for favor in the coming reign. Even the people, whose favor she had always courted, were cold and indifferent toward the aged queen. In *Alaham* we have just such a picture: a kingdom, whose sovereign is enfeebled with age, rent with dissensions over the question of the successor to the throne. Of course, the parallel cannot be carried out in all its details, but there is no doubt about the similarity of the situations, or that Greville's object was to bring out this similarity. The same motive that probably led him to delocalize his drama so completely—namely, the necessity under pain of censure, of disguising reference to the Court in literary works—would lead him to refrain from drawing too close a parallel to situations surrounding Elizabeth in her declining years.

It is safe to say, then, that *Alaham* could not have been written before 1598, the date of Burleigh's death. Prior to that date, the strength of Elizabeth's reign had scarcely begun to wane, and the question of her successor had not yet seriously engaged the attention of her ministers; but from then on, this question became more and more important, until during the queen's last days, men expected a violent struggle for the crown. It was rare good fortune that all the

great parties: Catholics, Puritans, and those of more secular temper, saw their hopes realized in James. The late limit for *Alaham* is, of course, the date of Elizabeth's death, 1603.

Dr. M. W. Croll,¹ on evidence of verse structure, places *Alaham* between 1586 and 1600. By taking this late limit and the early limit above mentioned, we can place the writing of *Alaham* between the closely approximating dates of 1598 and 1600. But if we are to follow the evidence of the relation of the drama to English politics at all, 1603 is to be preferred as the late limit because the circumstances which, as we have seen, probably occasioned the writing of the drama, became more and more significant as the end of Elizabeth's reign drew near.

In the case of *Mustapha*, the relationship to English conditions is not to be found so much in similarity of situations as in the application of doctrines of statecraft which the author puts in the mouths of his characters to the English political situation. Even a hasty perusal of *Mustapha* shows that in it Greville is voicing his discontent with "those new revolutions of time," as he calls them, in the early years of James' reign. It is a polemic against the Stuart doctrine of the divine right of kings. The one doctrine that stands blazoned on every page of the drama is that kingly power is derived from the people.

Mustapha, therefore, was not written before 1603 when James came to the throne and "those new revolutions of time" which are assailed in the drama began. Its late limit is 1609, determined absolutely by the publication in that year of a quarto edition of the play.

THE SOURCE OF *Mustapha*.

The following books have been mentioned as possible sources of *Mustapha*:

By Langbaine²:

¹ Morris W. Croll, *The Works of Fulke Greville*, Univ. of Penna. Ph. D. thesis. Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1903, p. 39.

² Gerard Langbaine, *English Dramatick Poets*, Oxford, 1691, p. 39 refers to p. 28.

Paolo Giovio (Paulus Jovius, *Historiæ sui temporis*, book 40. Florence, 1550-52; Paris, 1558-60; Venice, 1565 (Italian), Venice, 1581 (Italian). The account of the murder of Mustapha, which occurred in 1553, of course appears only in the later editions in which the narrative was brought down to date by other writers.

De Thou (Thuanus), *Historiæ sui temporis*, book 12. Paris, 1604.

Thomas Artus, *La Continuation de l'Histoire des Turcs*. Paris, 1620. This is an addition to the work of Laonicus Chalcocondylas.

Richard Knolles, *General History of the Turks*. London, 1603.

By Ward³:

Madeline de Scudéry, *Ibrahim ou l'Illustre Bassa*. Paris, 1641. Ward does not refer to Langbaine's list.

By Dr. Croll⁴:

A supplement added to H. Goughe's (or Goffe's) translation of Bartholomæus Georgievitz' *De Turcarum Moribus*, London, 1570.

To these may be added:

Augier-Ghrislain de Busbecq, *Legationis Turcicæ Epistolæ 4*, the second letter. Anvers, 1582; Paris, 1589.

Of these, Thomas Artus and Madeline de Scudéry must be thrown out because of their having been published later than Greville's play. Any one of the others might have been known and used by Greville. Hence it is wholly impossible to determine absolutely the source of his tragedy; but it is quite possible to choose from the above list the one book among them all that in all probability was the one Greville went to. This is neither De Thou nor the supplement to Goughe's translation of Georgievitz, the two which Dr. Croll, whose dissertation contains the last word on the subject, seems to consider most likely.

³A. W. Ward, *English Dramatic Literature*, London, 1899, Vol. II, p. 616, footnote.

⁴M. W. Croll, as above, p. 37.

It is Knolles' *Turkish History* which, since Langbaine's time, has for some inexplicable reason been consistently overlooked in the search for the source of *Mustapha*.¹ Knolles was published in 1603, the date of Elizabeth's death, and, for reasons stated above, the early limit for the writing of *Mustapha*. Is it not natural to suppose, then, that Greville found the details of his story in this new and popular history written by one of his countrymen, rather than in an older and less widely known English account such as Goughe's supplement to Georgievitz, or in a foreign history written in Latin like De Thou, or any one of the others in the list? Knolles must have been looked upon as the most reliable because the most recent and complete authority on the history of the Ottoman Empire—a consideration likely to appeal to a man of Greville's learning.

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GOTHIC BIBLE.

Die Gotische Bibel, herausgegeben von WILHELM STREITBERG. Erster Teil: *Der Gotische Text und seine Griechische Vorlage*. Mit Einleitung, Lesarten u. Quellennachweisen sowie den Kleineren Denkmälern als Anhang. (Germanistische Bibliothek, hrsg. v. W. Streitberg. Zweite Abteilung: Untersuchungen u. Texte. III, 1.) *Heidelberg*: C. Winter, 1908. 8vo., xlv + 484 pp. M. 4,70.

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¹After reading the proof of this article, Professor Schelling calls attention to his statement of the matter in *Elizabethan Drama 1558-1664*, II, 11: "But it seems not unlikely that here, as in the case of Chapman with Grimestone, Greville sought a source more easily accessible in Knolles' *General History of the Turks*, first published in 1603." A footnote gives the page-references to the edition of 1638 of Knolles, pointing to the probable passages.—J. W. B.